



# Spokane Area VOTER

Ann Murphy  
President

April 2010  
VOLUME LXVI/ NO 4

VOTER Team: Pam Behring, Mary Hughes,  
Joyce Jones, Kim Kreber,  
Ann Murphy, Alice Stolz

*"The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences the public policy through education and advocacy."*

## April Unit Meetings to Consider New Initiative for City of Spokane

League members at Unit meetings in April will hear a presentation and discuss the Spokane Children's Investment Fund Initiative. Backers of the initiative are currently in the signature gathering process. Their goal is to gather 12,000 signatures by the April 16, 2010, cut off date so that this measure can appear on the August 17, 2010, Primary Election.

LWVSA does not have a position on this initiative, but is asking members to consider the information here in this VOTER and to listen to the presentation. At that point, members who are so inclined may sign the petition, and even take petitions for others to sign. The Board is seeking your comments, and then will examine current positions and evaluate LWVSA's potential position at its April Board Meeting.

So, what is this initiative about? Backers of the initiative state:

*"Spokane is facing a persistently troubling school dropout rate that educators and civic leaders agree is undermining the social fabric of our families and community life. It is threatening our children's very ability to succeed."*

*"Almost one out of every three students dropped out of school in Spokane last year, among the highest in the State of Washington. Sadly, the rate is even higher for such student populations as African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, and foster care children."*

*"While our public school system is doing all that it can to close this gap, it truly is a community-wide problem. It demands all of us paying more attention to and providing more resources for programs outside standard school settings."* ([www.ourchildrenfirst-spokane.com](http://www.ourchildrenfirst-spokane.com))

Ben Stuckart, Executive Director, Communities in Schools of Spokane County, and a member of the Advisory Steering Committee for People for the Spokane Children's Investment Fund Initiative, will provide the program.

**Members can also get more information from:**  
[www.ourchildrenfirstspokane.com](http://www.ourchildrenfirstspokane.com).

### April Unit Meeting Schedule...

**April 8, Thursday**

Unit 5 – 10:00 am - LWV Office, 2404 N. Howard

Contact: **Martha Preecs** (325-4725)

Unit 6 - (will not meet)

**April 12, Monday**

Unit 7/9 – 12:30 pm - 221 E. Rockwood Blvd.

Contact: **Alice Stolz** (455-8944)

**April 13, Tuesday**

Unit 4 - 5:30 pm - Europa, 125 S. Wall (no-host dinner)

Contact: **Linda Milsow** (838-9186)

Remember, any member and visitors are welcome to attend any Unit meeting. **See you there!**

### Women's Suffrage Centennial Planning

Local women's organizations joined together at the NWMAC on Thursday, March 25th to plan the upcoming exhibit "Women's Votes, Women's Voices" October 30, 2010-June 25, 2011. This exhibit is Washington state's lead activity to honor the struggle of women's suffrage.

The museum is hoping to complement the exhibit by including community wide events on the subject of women's role in local history.

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## *President's Perspective...*

Oh dear! I thought I had lost my perspective!

Whether it be too much time with League issues – the Initiative and Referendum Task Force was time consuming and mentally draining – albeit rewarding.

Or – it was time spent away from Spokane (work, League and family) as my sister and I coped with the reality of doing a cross-country move of our 88-year old aunt with Alzheimer's. Now there was a different reality requiring extreme patience.

Or – getting sick in the process and figuring that that cold would make my head explode, all the while coordinating the beginning of the mega Spring activities that are an integral part of my employment as outreach programs on composting and recycling swing into full gear!

Or – keeping that handle on League activities – the March program on the 31st has all been well handled by a superb committee, but we needed to scramble to arrange unit meetings for April. Meetings at the Museum of Arts and Culture on the upcoming women's suffrage activities and MAC exhibit have been stimulating.

Other members have done a great job getting League involved in community activities (related elsewhere in the VOTER). This last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with the members of St. Andrews Church (where our League office is located) to explain what we do and to thank them for the use of their facility -- that really does make it all easier for us.

And then, getting back on my bicycle for a great ride in the sunshine on Saturday helped me to see that all that the League does is so important – and it is even more important for each member to make the time (it truly is amazing how much time we can let slip away!) to become involved in something.

Remember, you don't need to be invited to participate (although I realize that sometimes that makes it easier for some). I look forward to especially meeting new members as we all show up at League functions this Spring. Please let me know your passions!

*Happy Spring, Ann Murphy*

## **Splinters From the Board 3/18/10**

**Treasurer's Report** – \$6778.41

**Membership:** 85 current members

\* The LWVSA will participate in S.C.C. Civics Week on April 12th from 11-1pm.

\* The 2011 budget will be reviewed by the Board with a possible increase in dues. TBD

\* A guest speaker from the Spokane Children's Investment Fund will attend the April Unit Meetings.

\* Joyce and Suzi attended the International Women's Day and the LWV materials were well received.

\* The Civic Engagement Project training has been cancelled due to low registrations.

\* Agreed to submit a Presentation Proposal for the Pacific Northwest History Conference.

\* Check out the new website at [www.lwvspokane.org](http://www.lwvspokane.org). If you have any suggestions, please contact **Mary Hughes**.

## **Initiative and Referendum Update**

League facilitators (**Ann Murphy, Lunell Haught** and **Alice Stolz**) presented details of the Task Force Report at the City of Spokane Council Study Session on March 18, 2010. Council turned the issue over to City Attorney Mike Piccolo to draft the ordinance that Council will consider. A draft of the proposed ordinance was sent to Council on March 26. In the Study Session audience were many members of the Task Force and observers. A copy of the report is available – request from **Ann Murphy** ([ann\\_murphy@juno.com](mailto:ann_murphy@juno.com)).

*(continued from page 1)*

Some of the ideas include; a women's film festival, community suffrage parade, national speakers, a quilt display, and a historical fashion show, just to name a few. **Ann Murphy**, to celebrate LWVSA suggested; a historical connection to the CEP, a 90th birthday celebration, and a public presentation of the LWVSA directed ERA project by Dr. Nancy Engle. If you would like to suggest ideas, contact **Ann Murphy**. The next meeting TBD.

*Kim Kreber*

**Dues Payment -- -- Clip this form and place with your bills for payment**

YES, I want to join or renew my membership in The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area

Name: _____	\$ 65. Individual	<u>Distribution</u>
Address: _____		Local \$15.80
City: _____ Zip: _____		State \$20
Phone-- Home: _____ Work: _____	\$100. Household	Nat'l \$29.20
Fax: _____ e-mail: _____	\$100. Sustaining Member	
	\$150. Benefactor	
	\$ 35. Scholarship(call for application)	
	\$ 32.50 Student	

Please make check payable to & mail to: LWVSA 2404 N. Howard St. Spokane, WA 99205, www.lwvspokane.org

**WASHINGTON PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS**

**POLICE OMBUDSMAN UPDATE**

At this moment (3/23/10) the Legislature is in an extended session II and there is still hope that the SB 5912 which would create public financing of the State Supreme Court campaigns as an option for candidates will pass. The bill has been bundled in with the budget bill. The House did not pass their version of the bill - it did not go to a floor vote. However, if the Senate version passes, it would give the bill a headstart in the 2011 Legislative session - otherwise they will have to start all over.

Craig Salins, the Executive Director of WPC, was in Spokane March 13-14. He gave two sessions at the Peace and Economic Justice Workshop on Saturday and met with the Spokane Chapter of WPC on Sunday. We plan to be working harder on fundraising and just getting the cause better known. The Spokane Chapter is planning an event for later in May or early June. We can use lots more help (and money), so if any League member (or not a member) would like to get involved, please let me know. Or if you would like more information - either way call me. Ginger Kelsh (443-6108) or e-mail at gkelsh@comcast.net

The Peace and Justice Action League (PJALS) held a vigil for Otto Zehm at noon on the Fourth Anniversary of the date of his arrest by the Spokane Police and which resulted in his death two days later - March 18, 2007. Sixty people from our community participated. This and several other situations where the actions of the Spokane Police are felt to be excessive or in error and not dealt with satisfactorily has been the impetus for creating the Office of Police Ombudsman and the continuing effort for the Police Ombudsman to be given separate investigative powers to examine complaints about police behavior. The League supports both goals.

The PJALS Police Accountability Committee is pursuing getting a City Ordinance passed by the City Council giving that power to the ombudsman. The Center for Justice drew up the Ordinance which is now being reviewed by the City Legal Department. At this time, LWVSA has not taken a position. WHAT YOU CAN DO: E-mail, write or call your Council Representative and Joe Shogan (President of the Council) telling them of your concern and requesting that they put this Ordinance on the Council agenda. It is very timely - do it now. All the information you need to contact your Council Member is in the TRY (They Represent You) brochure. Again, if they don't hear from us, they don't know we care.

*Ginger Kelsh*

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY**

**Saturday, May 1, 9 a.m. - noon  
Center Point**

Our League has been asked to preside at a voter information table at a workshop whose purpose is to give information on independent living to young people who are "aging out of" the foster care system. We would be part of many other organizations who provide other information. Organizers do have a great way to get the kids involved in each station.

It is a fun event and time well spent. If you are interested, willing and available call **Ginger Kelsh** at 443-6108 or e-mail gkelsh@comcast.net.



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**  
**OF THE SPOKANE AREA**  
 2404 N. Howard  
 Spokane, WA 99205  
 (509) 326-8026  
**WWW.LWVSPOKANE.ORG**

## LWV/Spokane Area

President: **Ann Murphy**  
 Vice President: **Pam Behring**  
 Secretary: **Ginger Kelsh**  
 Treasurer: **Mary Hughes**  
 Directors: **Suzi Hokonson**  
               **Joyce Jones**  
               **Diane Knutson**  
               **Kim Kreber**

Nominating Committee:  
**Alice Stolz, Chair**  
**Martha Pomerleau**  
**Pam Behring**

## Calendar

### March

31 "The Third Branch" Judicial Forum @  
 Gonzaga Law School, 5:30-7:30pm.

### April

8, 12, 13 Unit Meetings - see page 1  
 15 LWVSA Board Meeting - 5 p.m.  
 27 Special Election

### May

20 LWVSA Annual Meeting, TBA  
 22-23 LWVWA Council, Bellingham

### June

11-15 LWVUS Convention, Atlanta

### Special Offer!

**New, first time members can join LWVSA at a special ½ price rate (\$32.50) for the remainder of the League year. Full dues will be due in September 2010.**

## Here's a Stimulus Package for You

You are interested in good government policy.  
 You want unbiased information on issues.  
 You want to learn about candidates.  
 You want to be an informed voter.

Who makes this happen?  
 You can, by becoming a board member.

If you are willing to serve, or would like to suggest a nominee, please call **Alice Stolz**, chair, 455-8944, **Martha Pomerleau** 838-2860 or **Pam Behring** 534-2223.

Think you are too new? We all were once. In League, we learn by doing. Your experience elsewhere will serve you well in League. We need your-fresh perspectives.

Think you are retired and tired? There are many small finite tasks, as well as board decision-making. We need your wisdom.

*Alice Stolz*